

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

DIGITAL SIGNAL PROCESSING AND SIGNAL FORMAT

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5 A digital signal comprises. data blocks, each data block including a header containing data relating to the block and a plurality of slots. Each slot has a slot header relating to the slot and a data packet. The data packets contain successive parts of information from a source. A first slot contains a first packet containing a first part of the said information from the source also contains a reference time. The or each subsequent slot contains a subsequent packet of the information from the said source
10 also timing information defining the timing of that packet relative to the reference time.

An encoder which encodes such a signal is provided. The corresponding decoder is enabled to correctly output the packets to allow correct decoding. Absolute delay of the packets has no effect on decoding. Jitter (i.e. variation in the timing of
15 the packets relative to each other) may corrupt the decoding. The decoder compares the timing information of each packet with an internal clock set by the reference time of the first packet and outputs the packets when the clock time equals the packet time thus at least reducing the jitter.

The data blocks may be SDTI fixed length blocks and in a transmission system
20 the packets are MPEG 2 TS packets, which are transmitted via an SDTI system. The data blocks may be SDTI variable length blocks and the packets may be MPEG2 TS packets, ATM cells or Internet Protocol packets.

25 (Figure 3)